

Abstract

The aim of the Master thesis *Liberal intergovernmentalism: The role of small states in the European integration process* is to test the applicability of the theory of Liberal intergovernmentalism to cases of small Member States of the European integration. Furthermore, the thesis aims to clarify the role of these states in the evolution of the European integrative cooperation. In order to reach the research objectives, the thesis uses case studies of Belgium and the Netherlands and it examines their motives and behaviour during the negotiation of treaties of the European primary legislation. The thesis is divided into chapters based on a chronological succession. Each chapter describes a time period before one of the treaties of the primary legislation, from the foundation of the European Economic Community until the signing of the Treaty of Amsterdam. The chapters deal with the motivation of small states for new negotiations and their claims in concrete areas of diplomacy. These claims are further compared with results of the negotiations in the context of the significance of the arranged agenda. The final part of the thesis compares the negotiating power of small and large Member States, Germany, France and the United Kingdom, taking into account the most significant issues of the agenda. The thesis declares that the theory of Liberal intergovernmentalism is applicable to the small Member States. However, the thesis disproves the hypothesis of a comparable role of these states and the large states in the process of the formation and deepening of European integration.